

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

AID-20 OMB-01 OPR-02 NIC-01 SY-10 OC-06 CCO-00 CU-04

RSR-01 /134 W

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R 231810Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3350

INFO USCINCSO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, AR

SUBJ: ANNIVERSARY OF TRELEW OBSERVED

1. SUMMARY. THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF 16 REVOLUTIONARIES IN AN ALLEGED ESCAPE ATTEMPT FROM THE NAVAL PRISON AT TRELEW PASSED WITH ONE SERIOUS CONFRONTATION BETWEEN POLICE AND DEMONSTRATORS, SEVERAL INJURIES AND ABOUT 100 PEOPLE ARRESTED. ALL IN ALL, HOWEVER, IT WAS A QUIETER DAY THAN EXPECTED. END SUMMARY.

2. THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATHS AT TRELEW WAS MARKED BY DEMONSTRATIONS AND SCATTERED ACTS OF VIOLENCE. AT THE LAST MINUTE THE INTERIOR MINISTRY REVERSED A PREVIOUS DECREE WHICH HAD PROHIBITED GATHERINGS IN PLACES THAT WERE NOT ENCLOSED AND ALLOWED A DEMONSTRATION ON THE PLAZA DEL CONGRESO. THE MASS MEETING WAS ORGANIZED BY AN ASSORTMENT OF EXTREMIST GROUPS OF THE FAR LEFT INCLUDING THE VARIOUS FACTIONS OF THE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY ARMY (ERP) AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

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3. AT ABOUT 2200 HOURS LOCAL TIME THE 8,000 TO 10,000

PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE BEGAN TO DISPERSE WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A GROUP THAT BEGAN TO MARCH TOWARD THE OBELISK. THE POLICE MOVED TO INTERCEPT THE DEMONSTRATORS USING TEAR GAS. MOLOTOV COCKTAILS WERE THROWN BY THE CROWD AND A POLICE CAR WAS SET ON FIRE WITH 4 POLICEMEN BURNED. ABOUT 100 PEOPLE WERE ARRESTED. ORDER WAS RESTORED WITHIN AN HOUR ACCORDING TO POLICE OFFICIALS.

4. THE PERONIST YOUTH (JP) HELD A SEPARATE GATHERING IN A LOCAL SOCCER STADIUM. AN ORDERLY CROWD OF ABOUT 50,000 TO 60,000 ATTENDED AND LISTENED TO SPEECHES REGARDING TRELEW, EVE PERON AND THE PERON-PERON TICKET. THE ACT WAS HELD TO COMMEMORATE THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE RENUNCIATION OF EVE PERON IN 1951 FROM HER CANDIDACY AS VICE PRESIDENT AS WELL AS FOR TRELEW AND FOR THE OTHERS THAT HAD DIED IN THE PROCESS OF "NATIONAL LIBERATION." ONE OF THE SPEAKERS REFERRING TO THE CANDIDACY OF ISABEL PERON STATED THAT SHE WAS NOT A FIGURE THAT REPRESENTED THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION BUT THE MAIN OBJECT WAS TO HAVE PERON AS PRESIDENT. A US FLAG WAS BURNED A FEW MINUTES BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SPEECHES.

5. A BOMB EXPLOSION WAS ALSO REPORTED EARLIER IN THE DAY IN A LOCAL HOTEL, BUT THERE WERE NO INJURIES.

6. COMMENT. WHILE NOT TOTALLY TRANQUIL, THE DAY PASSED WITH FAR FEWER INCIDENTS THAN HAD BEEN EXPECTED. IT HAD BEEN FEARED THAT EXTREMIST AND YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS, ESPECIALLY ERP, WOULD USE THE EVENT TO STAGE VIOLENT ACTS INCLUDING ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS ON THOSE IT THOUGHT RESPONSIBLE FOR TRELEW. THE ARMED FORCES IN PARTICULAR HAD EXPECTED THE WORST, AS EVIDENCED BY THEIR REQUEST THAT A TRIP TO CORDOBA BY AN OFFICER OF THE DAO BE CANCELLED.
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